

Congressman Will Bring Together Representatives from the Federal Trade Commission & Orange County Department of Consumer Affairs to Help the Public Learn Ways to Protect Themselves from Fraud

Tuesday, August 16, 2011 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon Mulberry House Senior Center 70 West Main Street

Middletown, NY

Middletown, NY -- In an effort to help safeguard Orange County residents from fraud and scams, Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) is sponsoring a free public forum on Tuesday, August 16, 2011 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Mulberry House Senior Center located at 70 West Main Street in Middletown. The event is for area seniors and other residents to learn how they can protect themselves from a wide array of mail, phone, and online scams as well as identity theft. Hinchey is bringing together federal and local anti-scam experts to speak to all interested residents at the forum entitled, "Being Scam Smart: Protecting Your Money and Identity from Fraud."

"Unfortunately, we continue to see a rising number and increasing sophistication of financial and identity theft scams targeted at seniors as well as many other demographic groups who may be vulnerable," Hinchey said. "While law enforcement continues to crack down on scam artists, the best way to prevent scams from being carried out is for the public to learn ways to spot fraudulent offers and avoid falling into a trap that will be costly in terms of both money and time. I encourage everyone in Orange County to come out to what will surely be a very informative public forum where they can learn about ways to protect themselves and their families and avoid becoming a victim of a scam."

County Executive Edward Diana, who is cosponsoring the event with Hinchey, said, "Orange County government is pleased to collaborate with the Federal government in educating the citizens – most notably the seniors- in Orange County. This program is a perfect complement to our Consumer Affairs office which deals with these issues each and every day. It's critical that residents be aware and informed in order to protect themselves and their finances in this fragile economic climate. I hope people will take advantage of this important opportunity. An educated resident is a protected resident."

Among the topics that will be discussed at the forum are ways for Orange County residents to protect themselves from: identity theft and telemarketing scams; fake medical discount plans;

charities and fundraising fraud; false credit and loan offers; fraudulent sweepstakes and lotteries; phony club memberships; and travel schemes.

Speaking at the forum will be representatives from Congressman Hinchey's office, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the Orange County Office for the Aging, and the Orange County Department of Consumer Affairs.